S: Vedder M-5 (ca. 1910) 1928
FX13 Hottentot FX13
Nama

Baskets
are made from suitably flexible roots and twigs. To-day [295]
they still accomplish great feats in the preparation of skins of 281
animals for domestic purposes. Hides are dressed according to a method inherited from their ancestors, the pieces of skin being put together in dainty and many-coloured patterns, which are sewn together with sinews of the animals.

In this way some form of home-industry has been developed [439]
in many a family, and as these skins are bought by Europeans they contribute towards its maintenance.

From their early youth the daughters help their mothers 593
in domestic duties, and without any special training, adapt 168
themselves to all sorts of labour, implicit in the management of a Nama household.

4. The main task is to attend to the cattle-farming. As 231
nomads in earlier times they lived chiefly on the milk and meat of their cattle and there were rich people among them too; for old documents tell of a certain cattle-owner who [554]
possessed as many as 4,000 cattle and 3,000 sheep. Even up to the present day each family tries to rear some goats, sheep and, if possible, some cows too. All do not succeed, of course, in becoming well-to-do, whereas others own large herds. The Nama is not so keen on rearing cattle as on rearing sheep and goats. There is a simple reason for this. 231
A Herero of the old type is satisfied with curds and whey and 262
only enjoys meat if he has had luck while hunting or when an animal belonging to his herd has met with an accident on the pastures; but the Nama is not so simple in his needs; he wants to eat meat. As in a hot country, like South West, meat putrefies very soon, it is more effective for a family to slaughter a sheep or a goat so as to provide just enough meat for a day's need. White settlers also keep a flock of goats in order to satisfy their daily desire for meat, for cattle are not only too valuable but yield too much meat at a time.

In spite of this they always had rather small herds of 231
cattle in earlier days, principally in order to have riding 442
oxen and pack-oxen, as without these a nomadic life would have been almost out of the question because not only the men but the women rode on oxen during their long migrations; besides the poles and matting for the construction of their huts as well as their furniture had to be conveyed by means of pack-oxen. The Nama also possessed horses and used them for riding purposes. Fairly early and in their old wars and pillaging expeditions horses played a great part. The dog, however useful as watching over the house and assistant in the hunt, is never cared for properly.

5. The Nama has always considered himself to be a master 461
and he has always deemed labour beneath his dignity. His 357
weak limbs and delicate physique disqualify him for hard work so that wherever possible they employ herdsmen and domestic servants, and Bushmen, Berghama and even Herero

441 captives were so employed in olden times. Although such
357 servants received no wages slavery was never known among the Nama. They were regarded as belonging to the family and quite often their masters were on very good terms with them.

262 It has already been mentioned that their diet consisted chiefly of milk and meat; but they never had a specific national food. They fed on whatever their environment offered them. Leaves of certain plants, bulbs, wild onions, berries of various shrubs, fish, birds, mice and lizards had to fill their dishes and to this very day such things are not scorned even by labourers, who get their daily ration of mealie-meal.

262 Nor is it desirable that the Nama should leave off eating
146 the old field-food "veldkos" altogether, neither is it advisable for the Government to prohibit them from looking for food in the fields. This veld-kos constitutes the Nama's vegetables, and wherever the Namas deemed themselves too dignified to look for it, or where they could not find it, their health always suffered. Everything should be done to encourage the Nama to avail themselves fully of the veld-kos growing in their neighbourhood, as their wages are never
[165] sufficient to enable them to buy vegetables regularly. Moreover, European vegetables are too strange and unpalatable to them.

244 7. Nowadays it is possible for only few to have their own
797 gardens. During the time that the missionaries took pains to try to make the nomadic tribes fixed residents, they tried to introduce hitherto altogether unknown horticulture and here and there with success. To please the missionaries they planted pumpkins, mealies and other garden plants, now and again with good results. When, however, the exhortation of the missionaries ceased they neglected their gardens even where water conditions were favourable. Gardening requires daily and patient exertion as well as a disposition that can look ahead, and this does not appeal to the Nama when there are other ways of making a living.

228 8. The Nama is much more interested in hunting than in gardening. Their ancestors had applied themselves to it, and with bow and arrow, followed by well-trained dogs, they would chase game untiringly till they killed it. In addition to this
411 they knew the art of charging the points of their arrows with a home-made poison which they got by condensing the milk
[329] sap of a certain euphorbia. After the Nama had become acquainted with the use of fire-arms, the gun, as well as gunpowder and lead, became the most popular trading articles of the travelling tradesmen. But fire-arms proving themselves very dangerous weapons in the hands of the Nama during their wars and rebellions of the last decade, few to-day are
262 privileged to possess a gun. It is not everything that falls to his gun on a hunting trip which is carried to the Nama

9: Ten Rhyne D-5 (1673) 1933
FX13 Hottentot FX13
Cape Hottentot

CHAP. XIV.

Their Character.

Their native barbarism and idle desert life, together with a wretched ignorance of all virtues, imposes upon their minds every form of vicious pleasure. In faithlessness, inconstancy, lying, cheating, treachery, and infamous concern with every kind of lust they exercise their villainy. They are so bloody in their inclinations as to practise their cruelties even upon their vanquished enemies after their death, by striking their arrows and weapons into their dead carcases. Thus in the hardness of their hearts, resisting every impulse of humanity, they persist in the savagery of their fore-fathers. They are so addicted to theft, that one neighbour does not stick to enrich himself by stealing the cattle of another. Those Africans who gave you your triumphal name, O Scipio Africanus, lofty exemplar of culture and sainthood, must have been more humane, more chaste, than these. And in addition to their shameful indulgence in vice, they secure for themselves a luxurious idleness: they never till the soil, they sow nothing, they reap nothing, they take no heed what they shall eat or drink. But the force of nature keeps them absolutely subject to their squalid ways. Wherefore whoever wishes to employ them as slaves must keep them hungry, never fully satisfied, speak to them with authority, and never fail to be as good as his word.

A consequence of their way of life is that premature old age seizes their lustful and usually exhausted frames. But since they are very careless, or rather utterly indifferent, about recording their age, no certain statement can be made as to their average span of life. For the exhaustion produced by their unbridled lusts is compensated by the temperance to which their indigence compels them. Their diet is a vegetable one. Our countrymen dispute as to whether some of them have not outlived the century; and some speculate as to this being the reason for the great ages of men in antiquity.

Furthermore, from their tenderest years they have such an insatiable appetite for tobacco (infants of less than 8 months old can often be seen smoking), that, when they have the chance of living for ever free from the restraint of laws and slavery, they yet prefer servitude to going without tobacco, often slaving at the nod of a master the whole day in return for a scanty portion of the weed. So extravagant and insatiable is their desire for it.

10: Grevenbroek F-5 (ca. 1694) 1933
FX13 Hottentot FX13
Cape Hottentot

The more distant the veld is from us, the more grassy it is, the richer in plants, and the more suited to cultivation. It abounds in oxen and sheep and other animals, as well as every kind of wild beast, so that, as I have said, it is like a zoo; and the mountain glades are so full of huge creatures that there is little danger to man from lions or other wild animals, for there is everywhere ready for them to rend and tear a supply of victims both domesticated and wild which they can easily pounce upon with less danger to themselves than if they attacked men who are generally armed. 136 231

There are quarries, and the mountains are pregnant with various metals. Sometimes the soil is rich in gems. And the abundant shady woods and tall stout trees are suited for constructing both houses and ships. Also there are the many wild fruit trees which could without doubt be improved by cultivation. Among others I have seen a species of olive, often warmly praised but as yet, through what chance I know not, neglected. It may be that the method of cultivation is unknown, and that no one has been found who understands the manufacture of the oil. 135 137

Near us are many fields of various kinds; that is to say, in a length of one hundred feet you will often find three or four kinds of soil: there barren sand, there gravel, elsewhere clay, and then marsh, mud, flint and rocks. This is the reason, I think, that the ground under corn does not yield crops that ripen uniformly at the one time, but some patches are more advanced than others. So a farmer does not steadily carry out the mowing of the crops once he begins, but turning his reaping-hook from the unripe corn, he goes now along this furrow, now along that, selecting what is ready for the sickle. 134 000

The sun is rarely so hot as to scorch the crops; blight is still rarer. The women of the interior, to whose lot this task even at the present day, from old custom and ancestral precedent, still falls, do not dig the soil with mattock or dibble, but with a rake. 132 241

The natives on this side of the mountain enthusiastically hire out their labour for a modest wage, and toil more submissively than Spartan helots. They are apt in applying their hands to unfamiliar tasks. Thus they readily acquire the veterinary skill to cure scab in sheep, and they make faithful and efficient herds. They train oxen for use in ploughing; and if put in charge of a wagon, coach or cart, they are found exceedingly quick at inspanning or outspanning or guiding a team. Some of them are very accomplished riders, and have learned to break horses and master them. You would swear it was a Sarmatian galloping over the open plain. Runaways, vagrants and 461 463 177

10: Grevenbroek F-5 (ca. 1694)1933
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Cape Hottentot

jurares: drapetas, errones fugitivosque tam liberos quam servos reprehendunt, retrahunt, domumque spe praemii reducunt. Bajuli, corbulones, gerulí, angari, hemerodromi fidissimi: lignarii, fornacarii, lixae, pampiniatores, vindemiatoresque et in calcatorio torcularii sedulí: silvestrem agrum extricant, elapidatumque pastino, ligone aut bipalio fodiunt, manumque buri sine laramento admovent, sementem faciunt, terram rastris insectantur, deoccant, lirant cratiuntque: irpicibus dirunciunt, eruncantque ex agro, vinea hortoque herbas, magnamque in messe quam demetunt operam indefessi praestant, capite hedera convolvulisque redimito, quo aestuantium radiorum solarium rigorem corymbiferi infringant, diceresque te bacchantium agmen videre, per omnia Afris nostris simillimum, nisi quod illi[s] dextrâ poculum vibrantes, vino madeant, dum hi una manu falculam altera culmos tenentes messores, areatores, evannatoresque acriter desudant.

Horum mulieres filiaeque non infideles lotrices, nec gerariae indiligentes: patinas omniaque vasa coquinaria eluere, sordesque everrere et sarrire, facesque ex agris undecunque colligere, focum accendere, coquulae apprimè norunt, Batavis parvo famulae.

Palam est quod sine horum Davorum opera, acrius coloni nostri licet fortissimi agris laboribusque suis ingemiscerent: sed proh dolor! nimia felicitate (ut assolet) torpescentes, tanquam Sulmacidis spoliis, sine sudore aut labore partis, enervantur multi.

Non ingratum tibi, nec aha re fore arbitror si narravero me vidisse Afram, cui pro diurno labore in gabata a quodam Belga analecta dabantur, quae laeta haud aliter quam pipans gallina pullos convocat, suos conclamans populares, eis capturam tanquam in diribitorio dilargitur, vix bucellam sibi servans, haeque bonorum communione promiscue gaudent omnes, ita ut tubulus nicotiani accensus ab ore ad os omnium accurrentium perambulat, donec in fumum et cineres tabacum conversum sit. A Barbaris certare beneficiis Christiani discant.

Rigandae terrae crebri fontes, rivuli, amnesque limpidissimi salubertimique non desiderantur, quorum incredibilis pellucidítas et dulcedo saepius sitim mihi adeo aut provocavit aut auxit, ut dixisses me sub Jerubbaalis signis novissimae lustrationis militare.

**) An excellent, if rather eulogistic, description of the way in which the Hottentots were being employed as servants by the European farmers. Most of the domestic labour, of course, was done by imported slaves, but many of the farmers already had Hottentots as well (cf., e.g., *The Diary of Adam Tas*, passim).

10: Grevenbroek F-5 (ca. 1694) 1933
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Cape Hottentot

deserters they arrest and bring back home in hope of a reward. They make trusty bearers, porters, carriers, post-boys and couriers. They chop wood, mind the fire, work in the kitchen, prune vines, gather grapes, or work the wine press industriously. They clear wild ground, and when the stones have been picked out of it, break it up with dibble, hoe, or mattock. Without relaxation they plough, sow, and harrow. From field, vineyard or garden they clean out the weeds with their rakes, and at harvest time they exert themselves indefatigably, their heads bound with ivy and convolvulus so that the green clustering leaves may mitigate the fierceness of the sun's burning rays. A troop of Bacchic revellers you might say, and indeed the resemblance is complete save that the followers of Bacchus brandished goblets in their hands and were drenched with wine, whereas our natives at the harvest have a sickle in one hand and the corn stalks in the other, and whether harvesting, threshing, or winnowing are drenched in sweat.

Their wives and daughters make reliable washerwomen and busy charr. They wash plates and dishes, clean up dirt, gather sticks from the fields round-about, light the fires, cook well, and provide cheap labour for the Dutch.[**])

It is perfectly plain that without the aid of these slaves, our farmers, stout fellows though they be, would be groaning bitterly over their toil in the fields. But, oh, the shame of it! as usual too much good fortune has bred sloth, and many are enervated as if by the spoils of Salmacis, won without toil or sweat.

It will not bore you, I think, and it will be *à propos*, if I tell you that I have seen a Hottentot woman, who in return for a day's labour had been given some scraps in a platter by a certain Dutchman. She began to crow with delight like a hen gathering her chickens, calling her people together and making a regular distribution of her booty among them, and hardly keeping a mouthful for herself. All alike delight in this communion of goods.[**]) Even a pipe of tobacco when kindled is passed round from mouth to mouth of the crowd that keeps running up, until the weed has vanished into smoke and ash. Let the Christians learn from the natives to vie with one another in well-doing.

For the irrigation of the soil there is no lack of limpid, wholesome springs, streams and rivers, the incredible clearness and sweetness of which has often so occasioned or increased my thirst that you would have declared me to be a soldier of Jerubaal at the last testing.[**])

[**]) See above, p. 61.
[**]) Judges, 7, 6-8.